## Trade

Trade and gift exchange were not clearly separate in Washo society. However, the language does distinguish between sharing (mibᶜshigihi) and trading (damalu).[1] In trade there tended to be immediate reciprocation while gift exchange often involved a time lapse. Trade also tended to be competitive and to increase with less intensive social ties. Trade involved explicit negotiation and social status was secondary as a factor in the transaction. Trade involved an impersonal relation which focused on the economic goods rather than upon the social relations of persons involved.

Washo trade was an estimated one or two percent of the total distribution. Four types of trade are recognized: (1) silent, without face-to-face interaction; (2) personal, where personal ties are relatively important; (3) administered, based on governmental rules; and (4) market, which is relatively free from personal and governmental ties. Washo trade in this framework was "personal".

Hank Pete maintained that women would often trade under circumstances in which men would ordinarily give gifts. Trade proceeded with little haggling. The transaction was initiated by either a buyer or a seller. It took the form of propositions, questions, and answers such as "I'll trade you this for that. This one? No, that one! I need more for that one. Then I'll include this, too. We can trade then." Trade with non-Washo was conducted through gestures and a few key words understood by both parties, such as damalu for "trade".

The Washo lacked rigid standards of reference, that is, the valuation of two materials to be traded in terms of a third material. Goods were traded without reference to their value in other goods and without a traditional exchange rate. For this reason it was difficult to collect data on equivalencies of value or rates of exchange.

From descriptions of actual transactions, and by insisting on some relative values of objects, the following scale was established by this writer. Hank Pete said that rabbit nets were never traded. They were too valuable. Many things, because of tradition or personal desires, were not traded. Such things might be a shaman's paraphernalia, a bow that had killed a number of deer, or food and clothing needed for survival. Freed and Freed (n.d., 10) state that the loss or destruction of a shaman's curing implements was a cause of illness to the shaman.

Certain things were near the top of the value scale. A double rabbit skin blanket, a large coiled water tight cooking basket (giuleu), a whole buck deer, and three tanned deer skins were roughly equal in value. Hank Pete said he had never heard of anyone who had three tanned deer skins, and a

1. A loan word from Miwok, according to William H. Jacobsen, Jr. (personal communication).

person never traded a whole deer. This indicates that the hide was about one-third the value of the deer.

Pinenuts were often carried and stored in certain kinds of buckskin bags and willow baskets. A tugabul full of pinenuts in the shell was something of a standard of measurement. The tugabul was a coarse scoop-shaped, open twined tray used for winnowing and roasting. It would hold about five gallons of pinenuts leveled to the rim of the basket.

Another basket used for measuring was the bayudate which was a single rod coiled bowl-shaped basket that varied in capacity from about a pint to two quarts. By converting from tugabul and bayudate to pints, quarts, and gallons it was possible to describe the value of a few objects in terms of volume of pinenuts. The following relationships were estimated by Hank Pete for a period in the middle of winter when food surplus was somewhat low: (1) a magpie tail feather = 1 pint; (2) an obsidian knife = 1 quart; (3) a pair of moccasins, an eagle tail feather, or a tugabul basket = 2 quarts; (4) a sinew backed bow and three arrows with stone points = 4 gallons; (5) an untanned deer skin = 6 gallons; and (6) a tanned deer skin = 7 gallons.

It is assumed that in late winter, when pinenuts were more scarce, this ideal scale of values would shift so that fewer pinenuts were worth more manufactured goods. Considerably more research needs to be done in this regard. The influence of extreme scarcity on the character of economic distributions is a problem that cannot be dealt with here.

The Washo had little trade with non-Washo peoples. Several influences appear to have contributed to this fact. The languages of the surrounding peoples were unintelligible. The Washo lived in a mountainous country where transportation by foot was difficult and occasionally impossible in the winter. They also ranged a large, productive, and diversified environment that supplied almost every kind of good used except ocean shells. A trek from Carson Valley over the Sierra Nevada for acorns (malung) might take them into every kind of vegetation zone and natural habitat in the Sierras. Salt (ungabi)[1] was available in Antelope Valley, obsidian (patsaga) from Mono Lake country, and red ochre (sawasang) from an area south of the present town of Dayton, Nevada. Foods such as pinenuts (tagum), fish (atabi), rabbits (p¢lleu), and deer (m¢mdewi) were plentiful within Washo territory.

1. This word (ungabi) came from the Shoshonean stock of languages so that phonetic variations of it were used by the Northern and Southern Paiute, the Ute, and Shoshoni (Steward 1938, 275-283).

439
484
The Washo lacked well tailored clothing necessary for extensive winter travel. Their techniques of production were geared to small scale household [291] use so that tradeable surpluses were rarely acquired. The Washo were [433] organized into small scale groupings with few specilizations of labor. They [621] lacked adequate storage techniques for fish and game so that surpluses in these foods were not preserved. Also inter-tribal frictions and hatreds often [463] prevented safe travel outside of Washo territory. There are indications that [251] once the Whites established an effective government over Washo and surrounding territory, trade and marriage between Indians from different tribes [628] increased significantly. The Carson Indian Boarding School, established [648] in 1890, became an important factor in developing intertribal cooperation by providing a situation in which individuals from several tribes could meet and [871] become friends.

438
Certain kinds of goods were particularly heavy in the trade traffic of aboriginal Great Basin and California. Davis (1961, 12-4) gives an idea of what these items were in California. In order of importance they were marine shells and beads, salt, basketry, hides and pelts, bows, acorns, fish, pinenuts, obsidian, pigments, miscellaneous vegetal foods, rabbit skin blankets, arrows, and a number of less important items.

In one table Davis (ibid., pp. 12-4) lists 83 traded items. The Washo used 53 of these items. Except for five items made of marine shells and "Caucasian goods", all 53 of the items used by the Washo were gathered or made by the Washo.

Pacific coast beads and pendants were used for personal adornment, but [301] they were unimportant in face of the competition with local shell, plant, [439] bone, and stone materials.

It is probable that all of the 53 items in the list by Davis were occasionally [439] received by Washo from non-Washo through trade. Even items that were abundant within Washo territory such as pinenuts, fish, basketry, and rabbit skin blankets may have been received by trade in special instances. Lists of things traded are of little value unless they reflect volume.

439
The goods most exported to the Miwok and Maidu were salt, pinenuts, obsidian, skins, and several Washo manufactures such as rabbit skin blankets and basketry. In return the Washo received principally acorns, soaproot for combs and brushes, a variety of medicinal plants, and occasionally manufactures such as baskets and yew bows. Few acorns were received by the Washo through trade unless the local crop was poor. All the other plants traded were received primarily through gathering and not trade.

Both Davis (1961) and Sample (1950), in their summaries of California [114] trade, repeated a view held by Barrett and Gifford (1933, 193, 221). It is